

# **Trials**

Trial hours normally are from 9:00 a.m. to 5: 00 p.m. All persons must be prompt.

Marked exhibits are to be exchanged three days prior to trial. A bench book of exhibits is encouraged. If trial briefs are requested by the Court, they must be filed and exchanged two days prior to trial.

a. Non-Jury Trials

Proposed findings of fact and conclusions of law are required to be submitted one week prior to the beginning of the trial term.

b. Jury Trials

The Court will provide proposed opening and closing instructions; counsel are responsible for all instructions related to their specific claims or defenses. The parties are required to meet and confer prior to trial to discuss jury instructions and a verdict form. No later than one week prior to the beginning of the trial term, the parties are to file with the Court a single proposed stipulated verdict form and a single set of proposed stipulated jury instructions, in writing and on computer disk. In addition, each party shall separately file any additional proposed instructions to which any other party objects.

Also at least one week prior to the beginning of the trial term, the parties must submit a statement of claims or defenses, suitable to be read to the jury during opening instructions.

*Voir dire* is conducted by counsel and by the Court. Requests for *voir dire* must be submitted at least one week prior to the beginning of the trial term.

In civil cases the juror alternates do not deliberate with the other jurors.

Jurors are allowed to take notes in complex cases. The jury is charged after closing arguments, although opening instructions are given at the commencement of trial. The instructions are read to the jury, and jurors also take copies of the instructions into the jury room during deliberation.

Because of the substantial costs incurred in convening jurors, juror costs typically will be assessed in civil cases which settle on the day of jury selection/trial.